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20281



Patty Northrop

**Patent Application
Attorney Docket No. D/99021D**

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor(s): Mishra, et al.

Application No.: to be assigned

Filed:

Examiner: to be assigned

Art Unit: to be assigned

Title: **FLEXIBLE IMAGING MEMBER BELT SEAM
SMOOTHING METHOD**

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please cancel claims 1-9 and add the following new claims:

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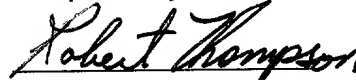
17. Apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the strip is a metal or a plastic.
18. Apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the strip is an electrically resistive material or a composite device.
19. Apparatus according to claim 18 wherein the strip comprises a supporting member containing imbedded resistance wires spaced to ensure uniform heating along the length of the strip.
20. Apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the strip raises the temperature of the seam area from about 2°C to 25°C above the glass transition temperature (T_g) of the thermoplastic polymer material in at least the charge transport layer of the electrophotographic imaging member belt.
21. Apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the strip has a width of from about 6 millimeters to about 30 millimeters
22. Apparatus according to claim 12 wherein the rotatable compression wheel comprises a hard plastic, metal, or composite material.
23. Apparatus according to claim 12 wherein the rotatable compression wheel is a metal wheel with a smooth polished surface.
24. Apparatus according to claim 12 wherein a rotatable compression wheel may be moved manually or automatically.
25. Apparatus according to claim 13 wherein the compression heating bar has a width of from about 6 millimeters to about 25.4 millimeters.

26. Apparatus according to claim 14 wherein the low surface energy or adhesive material comprises Teflon, fluoro-hydrocarbon polymer, silicone, polyimide, and the like.

27. Apparatus according to claim 30 wherein the low surface energy or adhesive material is a thin Teflon coating.

In the event the Examiner considers personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is hereby authorized to call Applicant's Attorney, Robert Thompson, at Telephone Number (716) 423-2050, Rochester, New York.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE:

Claims 1-9 are cancelled.

Claims 17 – 27 are new claims.